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ABSTRACT

As part of a series of publications reporting the promising practices gleaned from pre-elementary Right to Read Read programs, this manual is designed as an easy reference source through which parents can help their young children develop the skills necessary to read. While the manual is designed for use by parents, the activities discussed can also be effectively used by teachers. Administrators may also find the manual helpful when planning and implementing parent training programs. The manual is divided into the following sections: (1) "Should You Teach Your Child to Read?" (2) "You Can Help Your Child Develop and Learn"; (3) "What Does 'Assessing Your Child' Mean and Why Is It Important?" (4) "Skill Areas to Focus On and Why"; and (5) "Easy Fun Activities to Do with Your Child." (RL)

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Ideas for Parents

In Pre-Elementary Right-to-Read Programs

Manual II

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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The Child's
and Most Important Teac

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PREFACE

The purpose of this manual is to present in a practical way, ideas derived from Pre-Elementary Right-to-Read Programs so that they may be shared and to promote the enrichment and expansion of programs in early childhood education.

The *Manual for Parents* also should be read by teachers and administrators. It is divided into five sections:

-Introduction: Should You Teach Your Child To Read?
-Ways parents can help their children develop and learn.
-The meaning of assessment and why it's important to be able to assess your child.
-What the skill areas are and why parents need to pay attention to them.
-Some activities to do with your child which are easy and fun and help with learning.

The programs referred to in each section can serve as sources for further information. Credit is given to the programs cited by the use of reference numbers in parentheses following the information given.

The *Program Listings* will make direct correspondence practical and easy.

Program Listing

Programs listed here are those included in this manual. Each reference cited in the manual has been assigned a number by Children First, Inc. This is designed to give full credit for material used.

8. Baldwin's Opportunities for Language Development
Baldwin County Board of Education
Milledgeville, Georgia 31061

13. The Schoolhouse
1221 County Line Road
Highland Park, Illinois 60035

14. Project PERC
Hutchinson Public Schools
1520 North Plum, Box 1908
Hutchinson, Kansas 67501

15. Ideas for Parents
Hardin County Board of Education
Elizabethtown, Kentucky 42701

17. Right to Read Research Project
Northeast Louisiana University
and
Monroe City School System
Strauss Hall #230 Northeast Station
Monroe, Louisiana 74209

18. Diocese of Baton Rouge
Catholic School Office
1800 South Acadian Thruway
P.O. Box 2028
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70821

22. Pre-Elementary Right to Read Project
Detroit Public Schools
5057 Woodward Avenue
Detroit, Michigan 48202

23. Brainerd Independent School District #181
300 Quince Street
Brainerd, Minnesota 56401

25. S.W. & West Central Ed.
Cooperative Service Unit
Marshall, Minnesota 56258

30. Philadelphia School District
Affective Education Program
21st Street
South of the Parkway, Room 323
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103

33. Rural Early Learning Project
Right to Read Center
Derby Elementary School
Derby Line, Vermont 05830

INTRODUCTION

Should You Teach Your Child To Read?

By Shirley A. Jackson
Director, Basic Skills Program

Schools alone do not educate a child. It is parents—not professional educators—who teach some of the most basic, taken-for-granted skills and with a phenomenal rate of success. Think about it. What would you be like today if you knew only what you had been taught in school? Where would you have learned to talk, handle a spoon or fork, or tie shoelaces? For that matter, what if you had entered school without knowing how to speak?

In many ways parents and friends exert more of an influence upon a youngster than does formal schooling. Some parents, sensing this intuitively, assume an active role in the education of their children. Others, however, are hesitant, wondering, "Is it educationally sound for me to try to teach my child to read? After all," thinks the parent, "I'm not a professional."

You can and you should help your pre-schooler prepare both for school and for reading. Two of the most essential ingredients for readying a pre-schooler to read are parent-child interaction and a mutual sense of fun as part of that interaction. Parent-child interaction means simply that the experience of doing things together is every bit as important as what is being done. More and more studies are underlining this importance. One national survey made in 1969 and summarized below found that pre-school children receiving attention and support from their parents perform better than those getting little support. Remember, too, that the word "parents" includes fathers as well as mothers, and that both parents have roles in preparing a child for school and reading. Above all, keep the accent on fun and avoid pushing too far at too fast a pace.

Tips from a National Survey

In 1969 a national survey, "The Influence of Home Environment on the Success of First Graders as Viewed by Mothers of First-Grade Students," done for the Institute for the Development of Educational Activities (I/D/E/A) identified pre-school factors

that distinguish children who do well in first grade from those who do not. The study further substantiated the importance of parental influence during pre-school years. Here is a sampling of the findings:

- Most of the top students in the first grade had had early reading experience. Before these children started school, most of their parents had read to them, some almost every day.
- Parents who themselves showed an obvious and genuine interest in reading, perhaps by visiting the library regularly or having lots of books and magazines around the house, had children who were good readers.
- If parents themselves think that education is important, their children will generally feel the same way. This powerful motivation was evident even in first graders.
- Virtually all children today watch TV, but poor achievers in the study spent more time in front of the television set than did high achievers.
- Games requiring mental concentration were played more often in the homes of children who were good readers.
- How children behaved in school was closely tied to how well they performed their class work. Top students tended to like school very much.
- Parents whose children were doing poorly in school were more likely to be critical of the school. Researchers believe that such negative attitudes influence children and the quality of their schoolwork.
- Those parents who showed an interest in what their children were learning in school were more likely to have children with high reading achievement.

Start with Guidelines

These findings indicate how important a parent's attitude toward reading can be, and how much that attitude influences the child—even before school begins. A 1967 U.S. Office of Education survey found that two specific pre-school achievements were critical to a child's ability to learn to read: recognizing letters and distinguishing among word sounds. Granted that the pre-school years present an opportune time for encouragement, how can you use the time to get your child ready for reading and classroom work?

First, make learning to read a game—fun not forced labor. Children who have to be wooed into pre-reading activities are probably not ready for them. Ensure that the child experiences success right from the beginning. You can build in success by

starting with the easiest tasks, moving to more difficult ones as the child's skills increase. Don't be afraid to modify the activities to fit a child's individual interests.

Know a game thoroughly before you attempt to teach it and have handy all the necessary materials and equipment. Make sure you have your child's attention before starting the game. For example, you might say, "Let's play a new game. It's all about animals." Show the child how to play the game by running through the activity yourself. But don't get so caught up in the details that you forget to be supportive throughout the game and offer help when it's needed. Don't be afraid to tell the answer after you have given your child an opportunity to respond.

Stop when the game is no longer fun. Maybe the child wants to play another game. Be sure to give lots of praise when the youngster performs well, and an equal dose of encouragement when needed or appropriate. Once a skill has been introduced, maintain it by repeating an appropriate game every so often so that the skill will not be forgotten.

Finally, keep in mind that a pre-schooler's interest will wane if a game is played too long. Ten to 12 minutes of concentrated activity is usually enough for most four-to-five-year-olds. You can vary the games so they do not tax the child's attention span. Whenever a youngster's attention wanders or the game seems to be less fun, stop. Don't push.

The games and activities below suggest ways that parents can work with their pre-schoolers in the six main reading-readiness skill areas: language development, motor control, social development, visual discrimination, sound discrimination, and comprehension.

Games for Language Development

You can help your child develop language skills through conversation. For the parent, this involves listening to as well as talking with your child. Provide ample opportunities for a child to describe experiences and feelings. Meal times can be excellent discussion times. Although most youngsters can ask a million questions about any topic, encourage the natural curiosity in your child. Try a few of these language games:

- *Name Game:* Point out various objects around the house or outside while walking or riding in the car and ask the child to name each object. In a more advanced version, you describe an object and the child tries to guess what it is. Let the child ask for hints, such as: "Is it big?" "Is it blue?" "Is it round?"
- *Tell Me a Story:* Read to your child every day. When a story is finished, ask the youngster to tell the story in his or her own words, using pictures in the storybook as a guide. Or, let

your child tell you a story which you write down. Then have the child draw pictures about the main events. Write one sentence about the story under each picture, giving your child a personal storybook.

Games for Motor Control and Memory

You can work on motor skills like eye-hand coordination and large-and-small-muscle command. You can also help the child's visual-memory skills with tracing and copying activities and hearing-memory skills with exercises in sequences, stories, and oral directions. Some of these are:

- *Who Am I?* Rhythmic movements to music—hopping, skipping, jumping, swinging, and bending—develop your child's motor coordination. Clap your hands rhythmically or play an instrument while the child imitates an animal's movement and sounds. You try to guess the animal. Then reverse roles by asking your child to guess what animal you are imitating.
- *Sandbox Play and Blocks:* A child develops motor coordination through sandbox play at a public playground or right in his or her own backyard. Make sure your child has a special area just for play. Blocks are another aid in developing eye-hand coordination.
- *Match the Pairs:* Board games to help your child develop visual-memory skills by matching identical pairs are on the market. Or you can make your own game simply by cutting out squares or rectangles of the same size and finding pairs of identical pictures in magazines or newspapers to paste on cards. Start with three or four pairs, adding more as your child becomes more proficient. To play the game, arrange the cards face down on the table and take turns with your child in trying to turn up two matching cards. When a pair has been matched, remove the two cards from the pile. See how many pairs the child can find.
- *Rhymes and Songs:* Children love rhymes and songs, and these favorites can help in the development of sound-memory skills. Teach your child songs you learned when you were young. Encourage your child to sing and remember words to songs. Another practical memory exercise is teaching a child his or her address and telephone number.

Games for Social Development

Social and emotional maturity are reflected by attitudes, self-confidence, persistence, and the ability to work independently. These qualities develop naturally over time, but adults can provide learning experiences that help children develop a positive self-image.

A few you might try are:

- *Let's Decide:* Whenever opportunities arise, allow your child to plan activities or solve problems by playing "Let's Decide." Keep the choices simple: "Which book do you want to read?" "Which of these two games shall we play?" "Would you like oatmeal or chocolate-chip cookies for a snack?" "What shall we do today?" Leave the way open for more than one suggestion so that the two of you can discuss which one might be best.
- *What I Like About You:* You and your child take turns completing the sentence: "I like you because. ..." For example, the parent might say, "I like you because you are my daughter, because you were so nice to little Billy, or because you shared your toys with Suzy." The child might respond, "I like you because you are my daddy, because you bake good cookies, or because you take care of me."

Games for Visual Discrimination

In seeing similarities and differences in colors, symbols, and patterns, a child is developing the skill of visual discrimination.

Some exercises to help develop this skill are:

- *Find or Name My Twin:* Show a color, letter, or word to the child along with two, then three additional colors, letters, or words, one of which is the same as the first one shown. The child matches the like colors, letters, or words. For example, the child is first shown the letter A and then three more letters, B-A-C. The child must pick out the letter A from the others to match the first letter A. In "Name My Twin"—a more difficult version of the game—the child is to name a color, letter, or word that is shown.

- *Seek and Find:* Show the child a letter or word on a card and ask him or her to find examples of it in books, magazines, or catalogs, Have the child circle the letters or words in a magazine. You might start with the letters in your child's name. name.

- *Print It:* Letter recognition or a sight vocabulary can be built many ways. For example, use a chunk of clay to form large letters or words. Then ask the child to say the letter or word you have formed. Or fill a shoe box with sand and have the child trace letters or words with the index finger. Write letters or words in fingerpaint or print them in short broken lines or dots so that your child can trace over the lines with crayons.

Games for Sound Discrimination

A child's ability to catch similarities and differences in sounds is essential to learning phonics.

Some games to try are:

- *What Is It?* With eyes closed, a child tries to identify sounds, perhaps common household sounds such as the ticking of a clock, or outdoor sounds like the buzzing of a lawnmower or rustling of leaves, or created sounds like slamming a door, tapping on a pan with a spoon, or jingling keys.
- *Starts Like:* Select any letter—say, "m"—and show concrete objects or pictures on cards depicting words that begin with the sound. Tell the child that this sound is heard at the beginning of the words *man, milk, mustard* and *mat.* Ask for other words beginning with that sound. Repeat each word as you go back over the card, and then ask the child to say them and try to name other things beginning with that sound. Children will also enjoy searching through old magazines and cutting out pictures beginning with "m". Then the child can paste the pictures on the "m" page of a "sound book."

Games for Comprehension

If a child can begin to see that print is "talk" written down and that writing is just another way to communicate, you have laid part of the groundwork for reading comprehension.

Here are some ways to do that:

- *The Name's the Same:* Make word labels for things in the house—chair, refrigerator, stove, for example—and attach them to the appropriate items. Have the child point to the card and read what it says. If the child doesn't know a label, name it yourself. When the child knows the labels fairly well, switch the game. Give the labels to the youngster to attach to the correct objects. If may be helpful, at first, to cut out a picture of the item from a magazine and tape it to the back of the appropriate word card. In the early stages it's natural for a child to want to peek at the picture; later on, you might want to remove the pictures from the cards.

- *Let's Write a Story:* Help your child reconstruct an event, perhaps a recent trip to the grocery store, the zoo, a pet shop, a construction site, or a fire station. Ask the child, "What important things can we write down to remember this trip?" Have your child dictate two or three statements. Write down each statement and read it back to the child, pointing to each word as you say it. Then reread the entire sentence. Follow the same procedure with the other sentence or sentences.

Later, the child may graduate to more than three sentences, but be careful not to tackle too many words at one time. Build the length of these stories gradually, increasing one line at a time. Six lines are about the most a pre-schooler can be expected to absorb. The stories may be kept in a scrapbook and reviewed from time to time.

Try out the pointers and games just described on your pre-schooler. You probably will be amazed at how skilled a pre-reading teacher you can become. But the best news is still to come. What is fun now for your pre-schooler will prove invaluable when he or she enters school and formal reading instruction begins.

YOU CAN HELP YOUR CHILD DEVELOP & LEARN

Child development experts say 50 percent of intellectual development takes place between birth and age four—that means parents are important teachers. Derby Elementary School, Derby Line, Vermont (CFI #33)

Reading is one skill your child can develop mainly because you help him/her to do so.

-it doesn't wait for school
-the ways to help are all around you
-in your child's early years, you may get to spend more time with your child than anyone

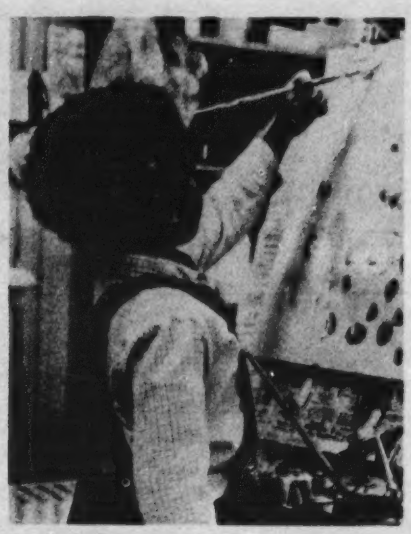
It takes many other skills to make up the skill to read.

Children develop skills at different ages so it's important for parents to know what they are and what to look for—but don't be surprised or disappointed if your four year old can't do everything your neighbor's four year old can do. *Remember, each child is an individual and will develop differently.*

Some 4's can climb . . .

Some can jump . . .

Some can skip . . .



Some can paint . . .

Most can talk but some use more words than others.

Play is work to a child—it's his way of getting ready for reading and learning.

Readiness takes place all through a child's (and adult's) life. It depends on the things that have happened to a child with other people, with language, with the surroundings.

Parents play the first role in helping the child get ready

- -on a walk near your house you can talk about things that are alike and things that are different.
- -in a paper sack put a spoon, a button, pencils and let your child feel and describe them without looking.
- -talk about different times of day and what happens in the morning, afternoon and night.

Preparing Your Child for School

E. Robert LaCrosse wrote an article, "Parents and Beginning Readers," for the Derby Line, Vermont Project which gives many helpful hints on preparing your child for kindergarten. LaCrosse states, "Going to school for the first time is an important event and there is much a parent can do before kindergarten begins to make that first year at school a constructive one." In summary LaCrosse adds:

-Your role as a parent changes.
-A parent now must learn to be a supporter.
-School doesn't allow much private time. Home can.
-Consider planning a regular time when you can talk about things, such as snack time or at dinner.
-You don't need to say, "mind the teacher!" If your child goes along with things at home he probably will go along with things at school.
-Don't set the teacher up as a policeman.
-Let the child know school is an interesting place where lots of things happen—a place to explore, be curious, find out about things.
-In school your child may have to do quite a bit of waiting. You can prepare for this by asking your child to wait until you have finished what you're doing. Take this chance to point out that in school there's one teacher and many children.
-To help an active five year old learn to be quiet you can ask your child to sit next to you quietly while you read a story. Also talk about how it feels to be quiet, to listen, to wait.
-You need to let your child know that the teacher will do things differently from the way you do them at home and that's the way people are. Some don't like four letter words or leaving toys around. A child has to sort out, "What to do with whom."
-Your behavior is important. How you can cope with your child's going to school will be watched carefully. If you see school as a new and exciting opportunity, so will your child.
-Develop good communication with your child and be willing to listen carefully to all that is said about school.

WHAT DOES "ASSESSING YOUR CHILD" MEAN & WHY IS IT IMPORTANT

Doctors, psychiatrists, psychologists, educators, social workers and others have spent years studying how children grow and develop. They have found that at different times in life most children are able to do certain things. Using the chart that is provided on the next few pages you can see some of the things your child may or may not be able to do.

It's important to know what to expect so you can do things with your child at a time when the child is ready for it. You also will know when and in which areas your child needs help. DON'T WORRY IF YOUR CHILD IS BEHIND IN THREE OR FOUR AREAS. NOT ALL CHILDREN GROW AND DEVELOP THE SAME WAY. Children develop at their own rates; generally girls develop more rapidly than boys.

Your child is a very special individual with his or her own personal timetable.

Please do not regard these developmental characteristics rigidly. Children are unpredictable. Some perform activities earlier and others perform them later, but all benefit from stimulation and encouragement. An overriding concern we all have for children is that they develop curiosity, a love for learning and self-respect.

Developmental Checklist

DIRECTIONS: Read each item. Ask your child to do each task. Praise your child for his/her efforts. Put a check in the *Yes* or *No* column. Yes = can do task. No=cannot do task.

Gross Motor Activity

Yes = Can do task **No = Cannot do task**

Yes	No	Age	Task
_____	_____	24 mo.	jump in place
_____	_____	30 mo.	walk on tip toe
_____	_____	36-48 mo.	walk on a line; heel-toe
_____	_____	36 mo.	can stand on one foot 5 seconds
_____	_____	36-48 mo.	can stand on one foot 4-8 seconds
_____	_____	36-48 mo.	can stand on one foot 10 seconds
_____	_____	36-48 mo.	squat in play
_____	_____	36-48 mo.	skip on one foot (gallop)
_____	_____	36-48 mo.	jump from **height of 12 inches**
_____	_____	36-48 mo.	throw ball overhand
_____	_____	36-48 mo.	catch bounced ball
_____	_____	47 mo.	hop on one foot
_____	_____	56 mo.	walk backward; heel-toe (4 or more steps)
_____	_____	60-72 mo.	run lightly on toes
_____	_____	65-72 mo.	hop on alternate feet

Language

Yes	No	Age	Task
_____	_____	24 mo.	uses three word sentences
_____	_____	24 mo.	imitates all four: kittie, birdie, ball, dinner
_____	_____	27 mo.	names common objects (three of them), e.g., ball, watch, pencil, scissors, block
_____	_____	29 mo.	responds correctly to "What do you hear with?" Can point and say the word.
_____	_____	30 mo.	concept of "one" Example: "I want one block. I only want one....or, Put it here. Give me just one block."
_____	_____	30 mo.	gives full name on request
_____	_____	30-35 mo.	gives use of object "What is this?" "What do we do with it?"
			names all three and use for at least one
			penny _____
			key _____
			shoe _____
_____	_____	30-35 mo.	points to 6 body parts
			hair _____ eyes _____ hands _____ nose _____ feet _____ mouth _____
_____	_____	30-35 mo.	understands three prepositions
			on _____ behind _____ in _____ in front of _____ under _____
_____	_____	30-36 mo.	forms a verbal unsolicited question
_____	_____	35 mo.	participates in story telling
_____	_____	36-48 mo.	says at least one nursery rhyme
_____	_____	36-48 mo.	can whisper
_____	_____	36-48 mo.	can change voice to faster rate
_____	_____	36-48 mo.	can talk louder
_____	_____	36-48 mo.	speaks in six word sentences

____	____	36-48 mo.	tells action in pictures. What is _____ doing?
____	____	36-48 mo.	can repeat three digits 6, 4, 1 3, 5, 3 8, 3, 7
____	____	36-48 mo.	uses plurals (3 blocks)
____	____	36-48 mo.	child verbalizes at least two: brother is a boy, sister is a _____ in daytime it is light, at night it is _____ father is a man, mother is a _____
____	____	36-48 mo.	relates experiences, describes activities
____	____	41 mo.	can repeat short sentences, e.g., "Baby sleeps in a little bed."
____	____	48-60 mo.	gives home address
____	____	48-60 mo.	gives age and birthday
____	____	60-72 mo.	speaks fluently except for confusion of sentence structure

Cognition

Yes = Can do task **No = Cannot do task**

Yes	No	Age	Task
____	____	24 mo.	recognizes own name
____	____	24 mo.	matches familiar objects: blocks pencil paper clip
____	____	24 mo.	can hand "another block"
____	____	24 mo.	**can follow simple directions** (1) give me _____ (2) put _____ in the _____ (3) put _____ on the _____
____	____	24-29 mo.	joins in nursery rhymes and songs
____	____	24-29 mo.	sings a phrase of several songs
____	____	24-36 mo.	locates source of sound
____	____	24-36 mo.	identifies common sounds
____	____	24-30 mo.	names three familiar cards out of 5
____	____	30-35 mo.	names 6 of 6
____	____	36-48 mo.	names 10 of 18
____	____	48-60 mo.	names 14 of 18
____	____	30-35 mo.	enjoys simple stories, reads from a picture book
____	____	30-35 mo.	participates in story telling
____	____	34 mo.	points to parts of the body, example: teeth _____ chin _____
____	____	36-48 mo.	matches 2 or 3 primary colors
____	____	36 mo.	**answers questions correctly such as: "Are you a girl or a boy?"**
____	____	36-48 mo.	can correctly answer simple questions such as "What runs?" "What cries?"
____	____	38-48 mo.	names all primary colors red _____ yellow _____ green _____ blue _____
____	____	36-48 mo.	can identify pictures of familiar animals
____	____	36-48 mo.	can carry out simple directions. Example: "Can you hand me 2 blocks?"
____	____	36-48 mo.	puts together 7 piece puzzle
____	____	42 mo.	can understand concepts of like and different. Example: Can find pictures of animals that are alike; animals that are different.
____	____	42 mo.	can understand the following concepts: on top of _____ under _____ inside _____
____	____	43-48 mo.	can point to: tongue _____ neck _____ arm _____ knee _____ thumb _____
____	____	48-60 mo.	names three objects from memory
____	____	48 mo.	compares textures, e.g., hard, soft, rough, smooth
____	____	48-60 mo.	reads action pictures
____	____	48-60 mo.	matches and names four primary colors
____	____	48-60 mo.	selects heavier weight from two

____	____	48-60 mo.	can define familiar words and describe them in terms of: (1) use (2) shape (3) composition (what it is made of) (4) classification (general category) Examples: ball _____ lake _____ desk _____ ceiling _____ house _____ bush _____ banana _____ sidewalk _____ curtain _____
____	____	51 mo.	puts puzzle together in approximately 150 seconds.
____	____	54 mo.	can name materials object is made of: spoon _____ door _____
____	____	54 mo.	follows three directions in sequence. Example: Walk to the bedroom, get your shoes, and bring them to me.
____	____	54 mo.	knows day and night
____	____	54 mo.	can tell pictorial likenesses and differences
____	____	54 mo.	counts four objects and answers how many
____	____	60-72 mo.	matches 10 or 12 colors
____	____	60-72 mo.	knows source of 15 or 20 actions: (secure child's attention and say "What runs?" Tell me something that runs. If no response, or inappropriate, give an example. What cries?) What: scratches _____ melts _____ sleeps _____ sails _____ flies _____ boils _____ bites _____ floats _____ flies _____ growls _____ barks _____ stings _____ swims _____ gallops _____ burns _____ aches _____ cuts _____ explodes _____ blows _____ roars _____ shoots _____ meows _____
____	____	60-72 mo.	can judge 5 weights once out of 3 trials
____	____	60-72 mo.	knows names of coins dime _____ penny _____ nickel _____
____	____	60-72 mo.	knows left from right
____	____	60 mo.	can count six objects when asked how many (how many apples am I drawing now?)
____	____	64 mo.	can tell which is bigger when asked: (which is bigger, a cat or a mouse?)
____	____	66 mo.	can tell what number follows 8
____	____	70 mo.	can tell how a crayon and a pencil are the same and how they are different.
____	____	72 mo.	understands numerical concepts up to 10. Example: say to child: Place 10 blocks on a piece of paper. Give me _____ blocks. Put them on the paper. (Replace blocks after each choice) Variation: Present blocks in random order. Example: Give me block #3, 10, 6, 9, 7

Perceptual Motor

Yes = Can do task **No = Cannot do task**

Yes	No	Age	Task
____	____	24 mo.	imitates horizontal line about 3 inches in length
____	____	24 mo.	imitates vertical line
____	____	24 mo.	imitates circular strokes—modeled

____	____	36 mo.	copies circle
____	____	36 mo.	imitates cross—give three trials
____	____	36 mo.	imitates V
____	____	36-38 mo.	copies H, T
____	____	40 mo.	copies cross (2 out of three times)
____	____	42 mo.	traces diamond
____	____	46-60 mo.	copies V
____	____	48 mo.	draws person with 2 parts
____	____	48 mo.	adds three parts to incomplete person
____	____	48-60 mo.	prints a few capitals
____	____	56 mo.	copies squares
____	____	60-72 mo.	copies a triangle
____	____	60-66 mo.	copies rectangle with diagonals
____	____	60-72 mo.	prints first name
____	____	60-72 mo.	writes a few letters spontaneously
____	____	60-72 mo.	draws recognizable person with head, trunk, legs, arms, and features
____	____	60-72 mo.	frequently reverses letters
____	____	60-72 mo.	adds 7 parts to incomplete person
____	____	60-72 mo.	prints number 1-5
____	____	72 mo.	copies diamond

Small Motor Activity

Yes = Can do task **No = Cannot do task**

Yes	No	Age	Task
____	____	21 mo.	builds tower 5-6 cubes
____	____	21 mo.	folds paper once imitatively
____	____	24 mo.	turns pages of book singly
____	____	35 mo.	cuts with scissors
____	____	36-48 mo.	begins to cut with scissors following simple patterns, e.g., straight lines
____	____	36-48 mo.	drives nails and pegs
____	____	36-48 mo.	strings four beads
____	____	36-48 mo.	can close fist and wiggle thumb in imitation right and left
____	____	36-48 mo.	puts six round pegs in six round holes, one out of three times
____	____	36-48 mo.	imitates building of bridge with cubes
____	____	36-48 mo.	holds crayon with fingers
____	____	36-48 mo.	builds tower with 9 cubes
____	____	48-60 mo.	draws with pencil or crayon
____	____	48-60 mo.	draws simple house
____	____	48-60 mo.	prints simple words
____	____	48-60 mo.	imitates folding and creasing paper three times—folds triangle
____	____	48-60 mo.	builds tower with 10 or more cubes
____	____	72 mo.	ties shoes

Adapted from: Hutchinson Public Schools, Hutchinson, Kansas (CFI # 14)

SKILL AREAS TO FOCUS ON & WHY

Children learn different skills at different times and mature at different rates. Each child grows through the experiences which she/he has as individuals. Some of the areas in which children develop pre-reading skills are:

-Gross Motor
-Perceptual (Fine) Motor
-Language
-Cognition
-Personal/Social

(There are other ways of expressing these same ideas and you will find combinations of these throughout this manual.)

Gross Motor

When we say "gross motor" we are referring to the development of the large muscles. These develop before small muscles do and include things like running, hopping, jumping, skipping and dressing up with old shoes, hats and dresses. Large muscle development is important to the reading process because it helps your child learn control of the body.

Perceptual (Fine) Motor

The Derby Line, Vermont project divides this skill into three groups: auditory (hearing), visual (seeing), and tactile (touching).

Auditory is the ability to understand, respond, receive, retain, recall and reproduce information.

Visual is the ability to track objects with coordinated eye movements, see simple forms and words in foreground and background, coordinate fine muscles in eye/hand tasks, and recall and accurately visualize prior experiences.

Tactile is identifying and matching objects by touching and feeling.

Derby Line, Vermont (CFI #33)

Language

In a handbook *Ideas for Parents* from Hardin County, Kentucky several statements appear under Communication which are excellent for use in defining language skills. Speaking is important to pre-schoolers who are learning to express themselves and are developing a meaningful vocabulary. Good listening is essential to learning and provides a basis for growth in reading. When your child talks and asks questions, take time to listen and respond. Encourage your child to speak in sentences rather than in one or two word phrases—never use "babytalk." Provide opportunities for your child to ask questions, sing, retell stories and recite rhymes.

Hardin County Board of Education, Elizabethtown, Kentucky (CFI #15)

Cognition

Learning to think. The Marshall, Minnesota project describes three areas of intellectual activity as; "the ability to use the senses, the ability to use verbal symbols, and the ability to perceive, think, reason and form concepts or ideas." In an article on Child Development the project draws upon Jean Piaget, Swiss Psychologist, who declares that cognitive development takes place in stages and each stage prepares the child for the next stage. Concepts which have roots in early childhood are:

1. Classification—matching objects that are alike in such properties as color, shape or size
2. Seriation—lining up objects in graduated fashion according to size, shape or amount
3. Spatial relations—the idea of how objects fit into space or how they relate to each other.

Personal/Social

Socialization is the process by which children adapt and learn to

live in the world around them. Society teaches children to form attitudes, develop skills, gain knowledge, and perform roles that are suitable for daily living. These are called goals of socialization.

Children who develop healthy self-concepts are able to relate to other children and adults in positive ways.

One of the greatest influences on the development of self-concept is the child rearing practices of parents and other close adults. The child who receives care, encouragement, security, love, and guidance will likely develop a positive self-image, but the child who is rejected, discouraged, or harshly punished will likely develop a negative self-image. Parents and child care workers have the task of assisting children in developing positive self-concepts by helping them experience feelings of adequacy, security, success, and worth. Encounters with playmates, neighbors, and relatives are among the first social experiences a child has outside the home.

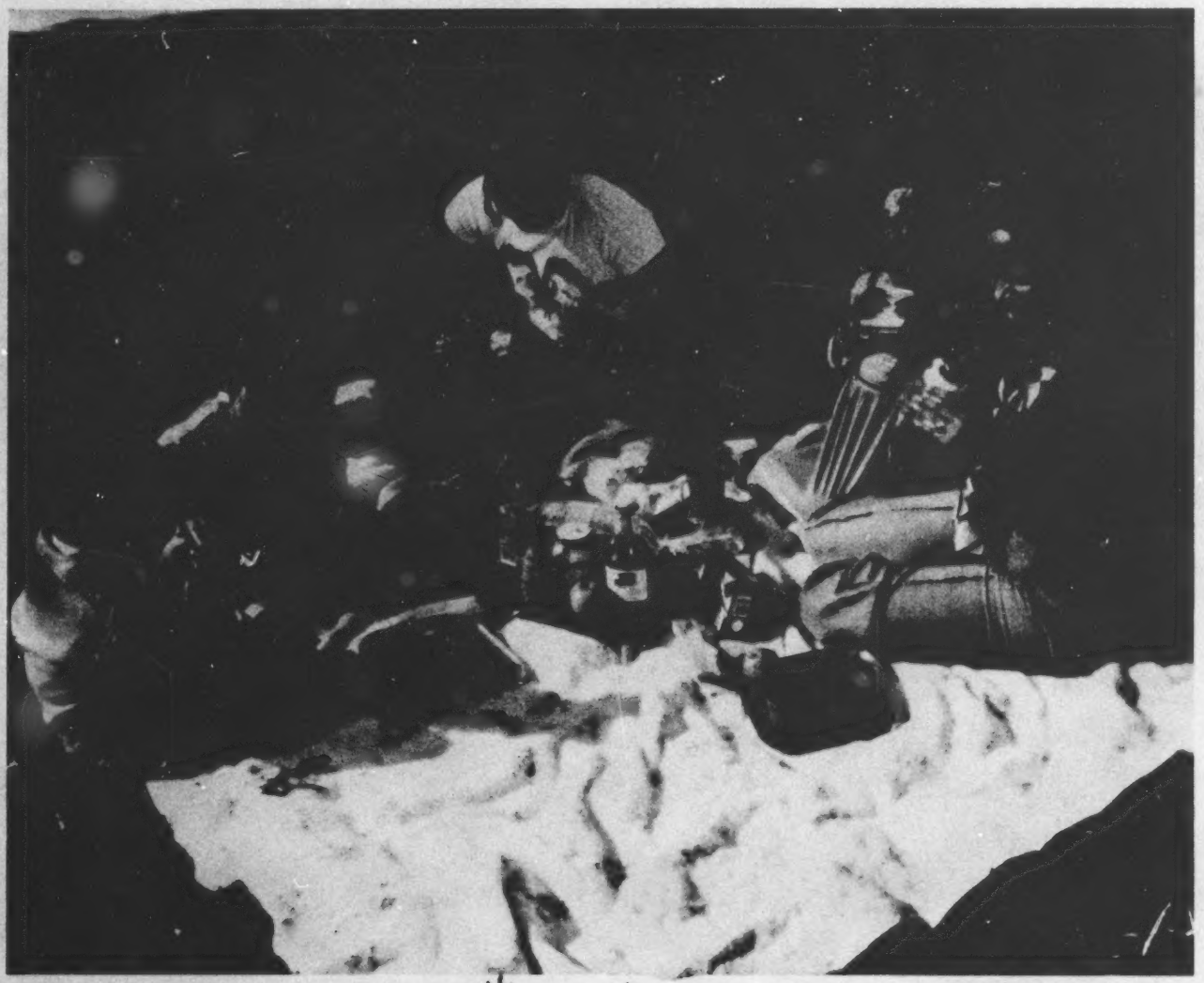
Emotion is a mental state or condition of excitement or disturbance that causes individuals to act in a certain way.

Too much affection as well as too little can cause problems.

An adult's message of love must be one that children can easily understand, such as a warm and friendly smile; a few simple words; gestures in the form of a pat on the child's head, a hand on the shoulder, a clap of hands as the child approaches; reading to them; and playing with them.

The expression of negative feelings is sometimes needed but is most helpful if controlled. Those who care for children have the challenging task of showing them, by example, ways to express emotions effectively.

Southwest and West Central Educational Cooperative Service Unit, Southwest State University, Marshall, Minnesota (CFI #25)



EASY FUN ACTIVITIES TO DO WITH YOUR CHILD

The following pages are adaptations of some of the excellent, creative activities produced by eleven of the Right to Read Programs. These were selected because they address themselves directly to parents and clearly point out the skills necessary in learning to read.

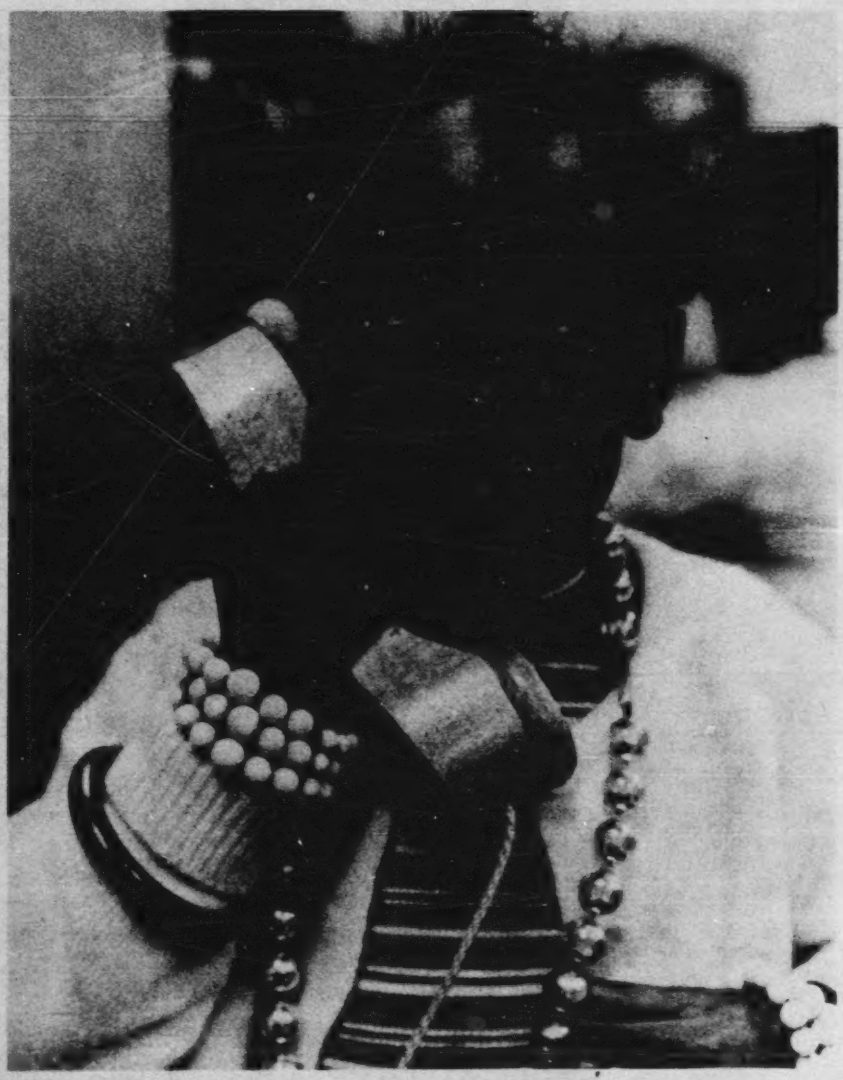
These activities describe: the purpose (the skills on which the activity focuses), the materials needed (most of which are readily available and others where no material is needed) and a description of how to do the activity.

Full credit is given to a program at the end of each article which has been adapted for each. The CFI number refers to the program listing in the front of this manual.

Adapted from: Rural Early Learning Project, Derby Line, Vermont (CFI #33)

Ideas for Communicating

Ideas For Communicating deals with activities that relate to speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Speaking is important to pre-schoolers who are learning to express themselves and are developing a meaningful vocabulary. Good listening is essential to learning and provides a basis for growth in reading. When your child talks and asks questions, take time to listen and respond. Encourage your child to speak in sentences rather than in one or two word phrases. The time the parent and the child spend together on *Ideas For Communicating* should be happy and successful.



Who Is Your Family?

Materials: None

Directions: Child names the members of the family by giving both first and last names. Example: "I am Mary Smith. My brother is John Smith. My mother is Sue Smith. My father is Al Smith." Add extended family as child becomes familiar with them.

My Family

Materials: None

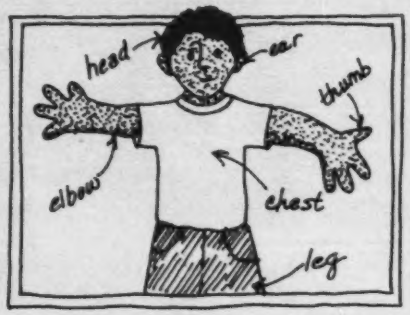
Directions: The child identifies all the members of the family and describes what each contributes to the household. What does each member do?

My Body

Materials: None

Directions: Discuss with your child the different parts of the body.

Examples: Legs, knees, head, arms. Ask your child to point to the different body parts as you name them. Your child may enjoy naming the body parts as you point to them. Bath time would be an excellent opportunity for this activity.



Adapted from: Pre-Elementary Right-To-Read, Hardin County, Kentucky (CFI #15)

Cooking Activities

A child is born with the need to communicate, the need for language development. Cooking activities can provide the opportunity for children to have concrete experiences with objects in their environment, thus making math and science discoveries and using language to talk about their experiences. Parents can guide the child's cooking experiments with questions to stimulate language and expand thinking.

Learning process development

1. Verbal identification of ingredients and equipment, matching symbols (pictorial and written) with the real item.
2. Pouring, measuring, stirring, carrying—small muscle activities.
3. Making comparisons (big and small, part to whole), number concepts, meaningful counting, adding.
4. Thinking about changes that will take place in: color, texture, taste and smell.
5. Understanding that containers of different shapes may hold the same amount of liquids; e.g. two eight ounce glasses, one tall the other wide, both hold eight ounces of water.
6. Talking about each step in recipe; reading recipe.
7. Enjoyment in process and product.

Suggestions for Parents

Questions for parents to ask while making hot chocolate:

-What ingredients do you think we need to make hot chocolate?

-What flavors do you want to taste?

-Which is more, 1/2 teaspoon of cocoa or one teaspoon of sugar?

-Are 1/2 teaspoon and 1/2 cup the same or different? Which is more?

-Two 1/2 teaspoons make one whole teaspoon. Do two 1/2 cups make one whole cup? Try it.

-How can we make the chocolate milk sweet?

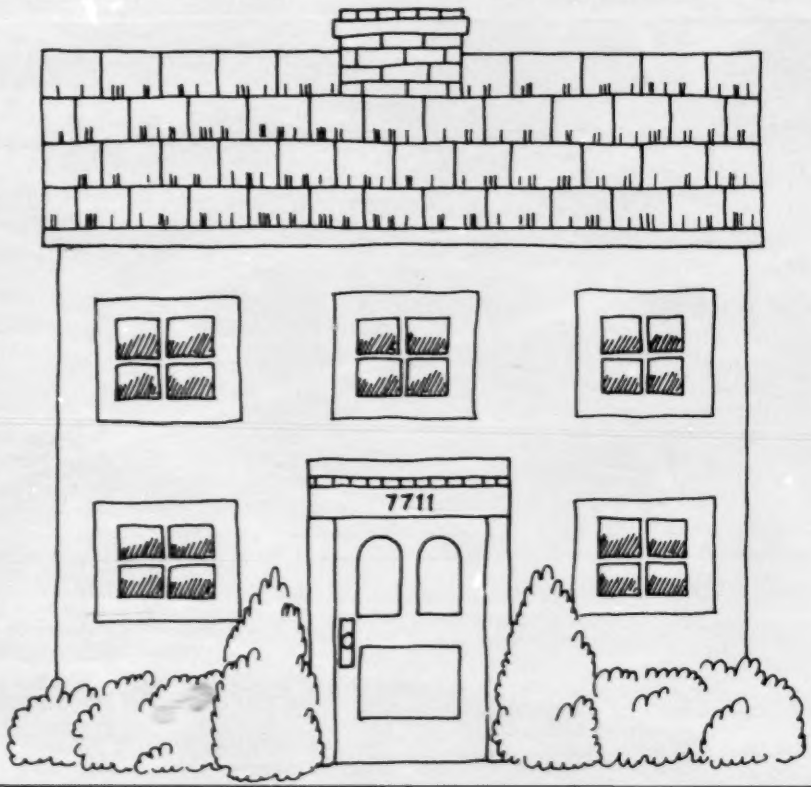
-How can we make the chocolate milk hot?

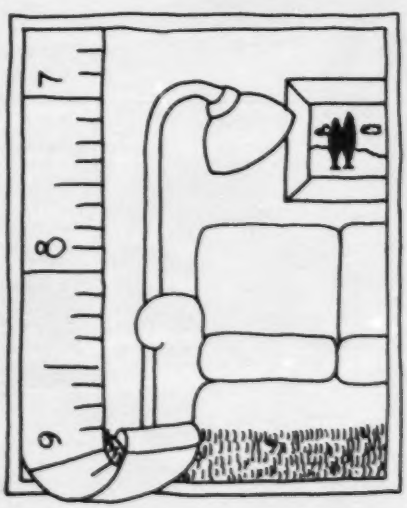
Adapted from: The Schoolhouse, "Parent-Kid Cookbook", Highland Park, Illinois (CFI #13)

A Houseful of Learning

No, this isn't a real estate ad. But it is a room-by-room tour through a house, anybody's house, aimed at demonstrating the marvelous opportunities for learning that are hidden in every nook and cranny.

The activities for children presented on the following pages are adapted from Home School Institute (HSI) Newsletter (Vol. 3, Nos. 5 and 6). This is just one of many low-cost services the organization provides parents and teachers. For more information about HSI and its work, write: The Home and School Institute, Trinity College, Washington, D.C. 20017. But do that later. **Right now, step into our parlor . . .**





Living Room

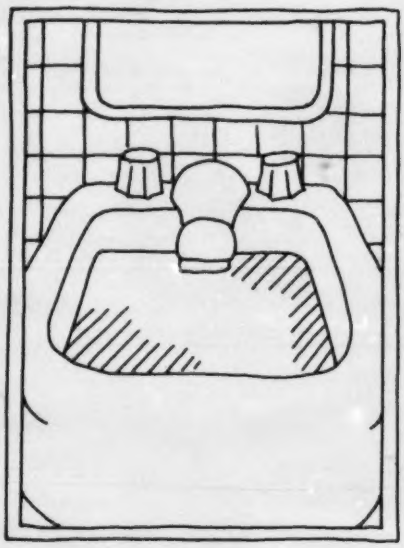
How tall is the lamp? How wide, the room? How long the sofa? The living room is a trove of treasures for little mathematicians to measure—with ruler, tape, string, any old thing.

See the newspapers and magazines left on Dad's favorite chair? Hurry, get the scissors. There's marvelous opportunity, here, for exercising the reading, writing and math skills. For example: Challenge your child to search ads for certain letters and combinations of letters; s/he cuts them out and mounts them on shirtboards for all the world to admire, or have your child cut out pictures of furniture, which s/he places in appropriate rooms on a big floorplan you provide. Or, mount magazine pictures on shirtboards and then cut them into jigsaw puzzles to entertain your child and set her/his observation and thinking machinery to churning. Or, play a game in which you tell your child to pretend s/he has, say, $25 to spend; then s/he hunts through ads to make up a shopping list that won't break the bank. And how about the TV? It's a jewel of a tool for getting your pre-schooler into clockwork; just make him/her responsible for keeping tabs on tune-in time for his/her favorite show. For children of any age, use TV as a window on the world; open it up to let the learning-about far-away places, the arts, current events, etc.-come in.

Bedroom

There are words that attach to clothing (shirt, sock, etc.) and words that attach to body parts (foot, arm, etc.) and the bedroom is a fine place to learn both. Say the words aloud as clothes go on and off. Nice, too, to tape a large outline drawing of your child's silhouette on the wall; then label the parts while s/he watches.

How delighted, the child who places among the favorites on the shelf, the book that s/he authored. Supply four sheets of white paper, folded and stapled together, book-style, and let your youngster go to it. (Pre-schoolers draw their stories



and dictate captions; older kids do both the pix and the patter.)

From time to time, give the bedtime story ritual a new twist: stop just short of the ending and let your ever-loving guess how it will all turn out. It's a good way to build listening skills and expand the imagination. When is a bedroom a "laundry math"? When your child matches and counts socks, or counts and folds sheets or separates the undies from the shirts in it. Sock and clock, bed and head-rhymes like these are all around the bedroom. Rhyming games are nice to go to sleep on and make for reading readiness.

Bath

Labels on medicine, cleanser and pill containers are life-and-death words that your child must be taught to read carefully. What better time than bath time for a little scientific investigation into the question of which objects (soap, cork, etc.) float and which sink?

Let the child record his/her weight on a calendar.

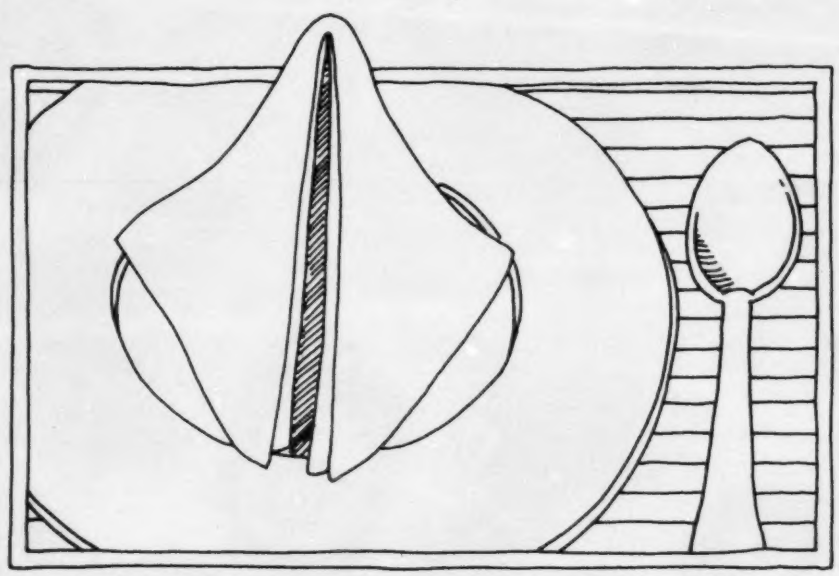
Run hot water, build steam. Discuss what happens and why.

Turn on the cold, open the door. What happens?

Have the child look for shapes, e.g. (oval soap, round bottle).

Dining Room

Helping to set the table is a wonderful way for a young child to learn the concept of one-to-one correspondence (e.g. one fork for each member of the family)—an understanding that's mighty useful when it comes to beginning reading and math. Because they're so foldable, paper napkins are nifty for "fractioning." Help your child get a feeling for fractions by having him/her fold a napkin first into halves, and then, into quarters. Soon, s/he'll work his/her way up to eighths—maybe even, sixteenths.



Kitchen

From time to time, let the child help with the food shopping list. As s/he checks shelves to see what's needed, s/he learns to spell words like bread and cheese and a little about food measures, weights and costs.

The child selects a simple recipe (e.g., Jell-O), read the directions and does the "cooking." If s/he is a prereader, you read directions and the child does as much of the work as s/he can.

Write a number in each cup of an egg carton. Into each, the child places a corresponding number of buttons.

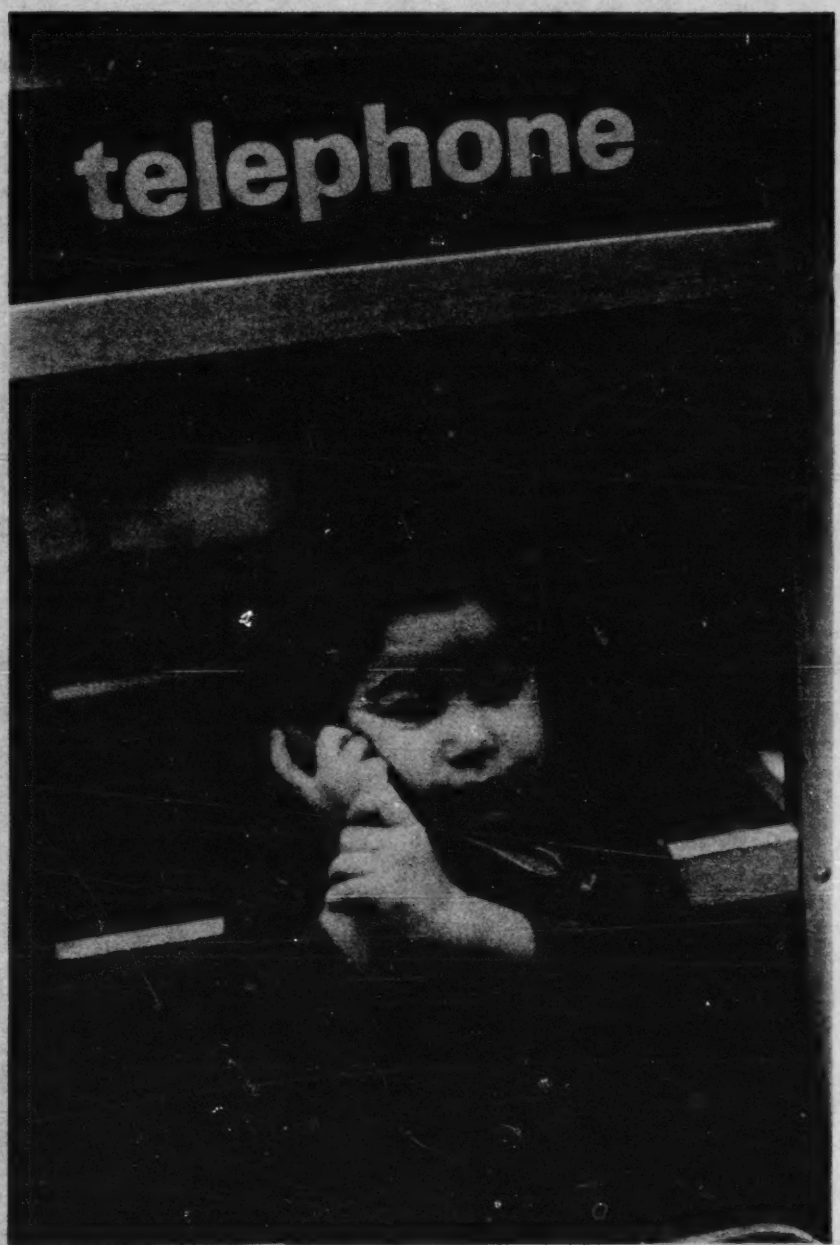
S.W. and West Central Ed. Cooperative Service Unit, Marshall, Minnesota (CFI #25)

LISTENING: A LEARNING TOOL

Have you ever felt that your child didn't hear when you talked to him or her? Children very readily learn to tune out conversation and other sounds around them, yet they get most of their information through listening. This is the reason for placing great emphasis on helping young children develop good listening skills.

There are many ways to help your child to increase his or her listening skills by providing a *purpose for listening.*

Here are some suggestions for you. Involve *all* your children, school age and younger because no one ever out grows the need to learn and improve listening skills.



The "Wrong" Game

You will catch your child's attention by saying things wrong. Try something like, "Let's go into the bedroom to cook supper", "Get the ice out of the stove", or "Take the plates and set the bed."

Recite a nursery rhyme incorrectly. Try something like "Little Boy Green, come blow your whistle..." This also works with familiar stories such as *Goldilocks and the Three Turtles* or *Purple Riding Hood.*

Hide-and-Seek Game

Hide something in the room. Give your child clues to where it is by clapping or humming. Clap or hum louder when s/he is nearer the object and softer when s/he is further away.

Adapted from: "Parent Involvement Handbook," PROJECT: BOLD, Milledgeville, Georgia (CFI #8)

Sound Discrimination

Objective: Discriminates between sound differences (slow-fast, loud-soft, etc.) What do we mean by: quiet, noisy, ball sounds, falling sounds, shaking sounds, musical sounds?

Materials: paper bag or any fabric bag, household noisemakers

Directions: An old laundry bag will hold lots of fun noisemakers. You might dump them all out, have your child turn his/her back while you make a sound with one. Put it back in the pile where s/he must find it.

Then turn around. If you have several children, they will entertain each other.

More Fun with Sounds

Set up a listening center where child can experiment with sounds, (hitting various things attached to string—woodblock, paper, etc.)

Match identical sounds (sound cans). Fill small cans with varied ingredients. Child finds two that sound alike. (Empty filmstrip cans are good for this activity.)

Have children move hand or body up and down with xylophone or piano. (identifies high-low notes)

Use rhythm instruments to reproduce sounds (loud-soft)

Clapping game. Pick one child to be "it". S/he leaves room while others pick object. When s/he comes back, the other children guide the person who is "it" to the chosen object by clapping louder the nearer the person comes or softer as that person moves away from it.

Choose child to stamp his or her feet out of the room and down the hall a bit and then stamp his or her feet back into the room. Have the children notice the loudness-softness.

Adapted from:
Independent School District #181, Brainerd, Minnesota (CFI #23)

Rhyming

Objective: To develop good auditory perception.

Materials: None

Directions: The parent makes up some short rhymes and explains to the child what s/he is doing, that s/he will say the rhyme but leave out the last word of the second line which must rhyme with the last word of the first line. First, give example to the child using familiar rhymes such as:

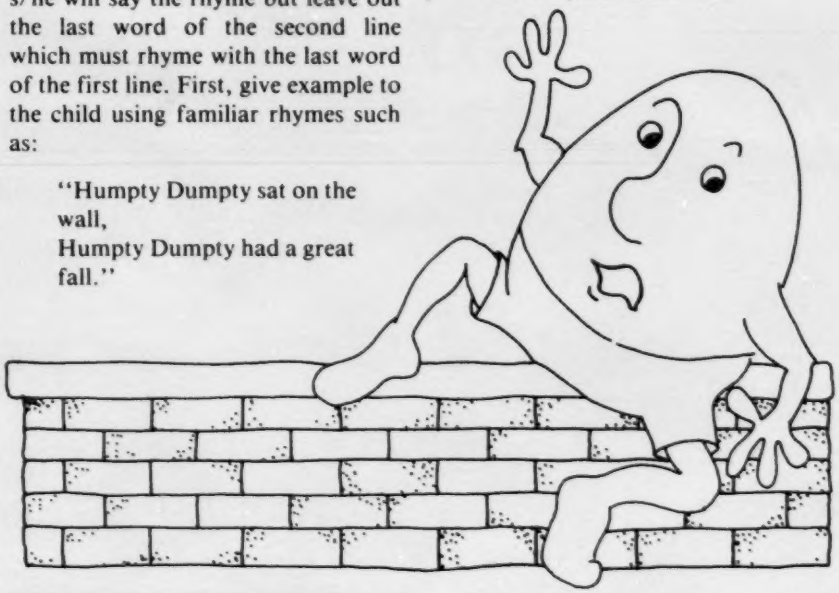
> "Humpty Dumpty sat on the wall,
> Humpty Dumpty had a great fall."

To insure that the child is listening for and thinking of rhyming words, make up some rhymes such as:

The boy with the ball
is very, very _____.

Sit in the chair
while I cut your _____.

That's no log;
That's my _____.



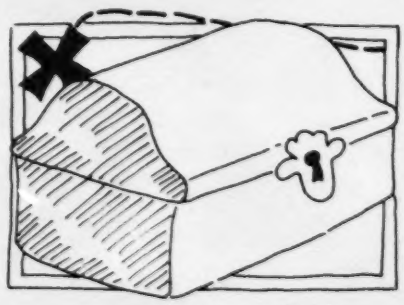
Remembering

Objective: To develop auditory sequencing and auditory memory

Materials: None

Directions:
Tell a story once. Then tell the story again but let your child fill in the important areas.

Conduct a *Treasure Hunt* using oral clues. The child must listen to the directions to be able to find the treasure.



Objective: To develop good auditory recall

Materials: None

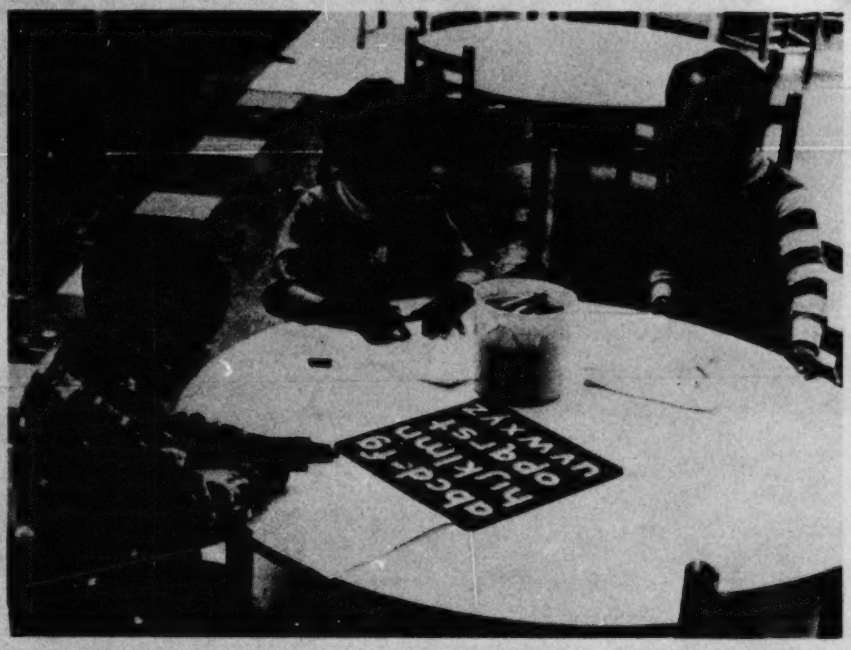
Directions: The parent gives directions to do two or more things. The child follows the directions in the sequence in which it is given. (Directions may get longer and more complicated as child progresses.) For example:

> Skip to my desk, hop to the kitchen door, and then crawl back to me and give me a big hug.

After the direction has been followed, discuss whether or not it was done correctly and repeat the command.

Adapted from:
Diocese of Baton Rouge Catholic School Office, Baton Rouge, Louisiana (CFI #18)

LANGUAGE SKILLS



On, Over, Under

Objective: To demonstrate an understanding of spatial relationships (behind, above, longer, heavier, etc.)

Materials: None

Directions: Be sure to teach the terms on, over, under, above, below, off. Children often confuse them. Demonstrate what you mean—then have the child do it.

> I'm putting the plate *on* the table.
> You can put a plate *on the table.*
> Good! What did you do? "
>
> *Teach one term at a time.*

Teach your child to follow directions. Give specific directions.

> Sit on the red chair.
> Get your green checked dress.
> Put your stockings in the second drawer.

If your child can't do something, demonstrate what you want him/her to do.

Twiddle Dum

Objective: Child shows the ability to use complete sentences

Materials: None

Directions: Sit with your child in a comfortable place—indoors or outside. Say each verse one at a time. Have your child answer you; using a complete sentence.

> *Twiddle dum, twiddle dee*
> *Look with your eyes*
> *And tell me what you see.*
>
> *Twiddle dum, twiddle deel*
> *Use your hands*
> *And tell me what you feel.*
>
> *Twiddle dum, twiddle dear*
> *Open up your ears*
> *And tell me what you hear.*
>
> *Twiddle dum, twiddle dell*
> *Sniff with your nose*
> *And tell me what you smell.*

Adapted from:
Independent School District #181, Brainerd, Minnesota (CFI #23)

A Finger Play

Objective: To develop language and small muscle skills and self-concept

Materials: None

Directions:
Taking a walk is so much fun
We don't hurry, we don't run.
(Move fingers sideways)
We watch for birds, we watch for bees
(Point to eye)
We look for all the falling leaves.
(Flutter fingers)

Adapted from:
Hutchinson Public Schools, Hutchinson, Kansas (CFI #14)

Alphabet Hide-and-Seek

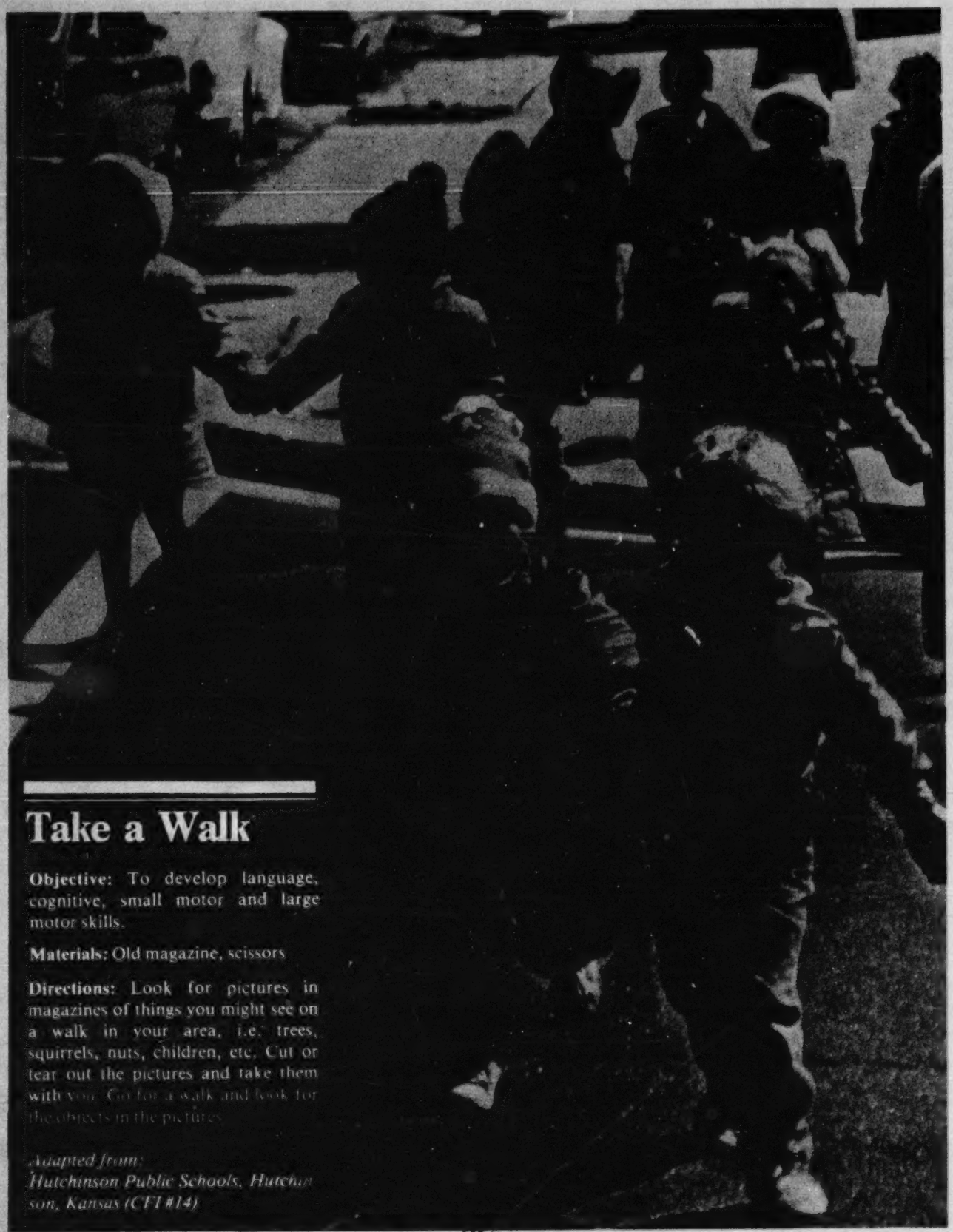
Objective: Name recognition, letter identification and cognitive skills

Materials: Paper, scissors, markers, crayons

Directions: Draw and cut out the letters in your child's name. Hide each letter in a special hiding place. (Preferably in one room.) Let your child find the letters. Help, if necessary. Spread out the letters in proper order on the floor. You may give your child a piece of paper with his/her name printed on it as a guide to letter arranging. The child may decorate the letters with magic markers or crayons. S/he may practice mixing up the letters and laying them out again.

Note: Only the first letter of your child's name should be capitalized. The following letters should be small letters. The reason for this is that s/he is expected to use small letters in Kindergarten.

Adapted from:
Hutchinson Public Schools, Hutchinson, Kansas, Project PERC (CFI #14)



Take a Walk

Objective: To develop language, cognitive, small motor and large motor skills.

Materials: Old magazine, scissors

Directions: Look for pictures in magazines of things you might see on a walk in your area, i.e. trees, squirrels, nuts, children, etc. Cut or tear out the pictures and take them with you. Go for a walk and look for the objects in the pictures.

Adapted from:
Hutchinson Public Schools, Hutchinson, Kansas (CFT #14)

Ideas for Knowing

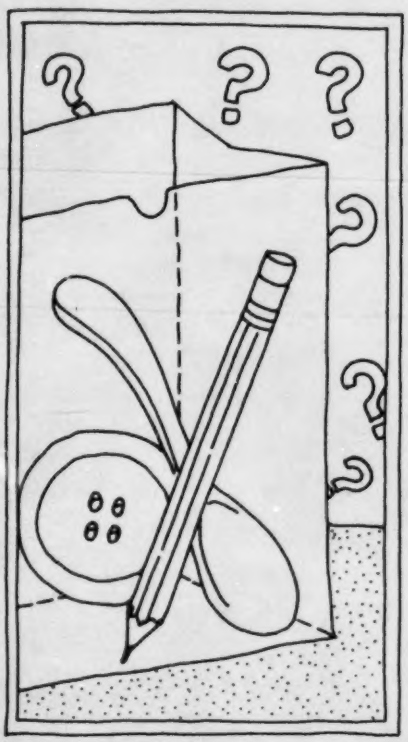
Knowing takes preparation. Readiness is the child's foundation for reading and learning. Some of the readiness skills are:

1. Building background experiences and concepts,
2. Encouraging thinking skills,
3. Learning to follow directions and to pay attention,
4. Developing a positive attitude toward reading, and
5. Differentiating colors, sizes, shapes, and sounds.

Readiness depends on a number of things including the experiences the child has had with language, people and environment. It is not something that takes place in a short time. It is a period of development that includes all of the child's life.

Readiness begins long before the child enters school. The school only continues the readiness experiences begun at home. In all these experiences, the part played by you is the most important since you are your child's first teacher.

The following activities are designed to give you ideas in relating readiness experiences to your child. All activities are simple and some use household items. We hope the listed experiences will be fun for you as well as your child.



Puzzles

Materials: Magazines, paste, scissors, heavy paper.

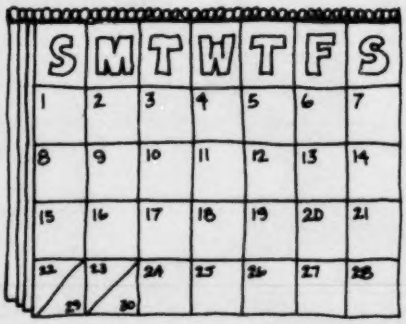
Directions: Paste magazine pictures onto heavy paper; then cut apart to make a puzzle. Puzzles should start simple and each time become more difficult. Example: 2 pieces to 4 pieces to 6 pieces.

Mystery Bag

Materials: Paper sack, household items such as spoon, pencil, button.

Directions: In a paper sack, put in household items. Without looking, let child feel and describe the objects found within.

Days of the Week



Materials: A calendar

Directions: Discuss with child what day it is and where that particular day is on the calendar. Ask child which day comes before this particular day and after.

Adapted from:
Pre-Elementary Right-to-Read, Hardin County, Kentucky (CFI #15)

Feeling Air

Objective: Investigating, using senses, feeling air

Materials: Empty bottle, bowl of water, straw, balloon

Directions: Start by dropping an empty bottle into a bowl of water. What do you see? As the water fills the empty bottle it pushes out the air and makes bubbles.

Blow through a straw onto your hand. What do you feel?

Blow up a balloon. Let go. What happened when the air pushed out?

Blow up a balloon and hold over a pan of water. Now let the air out. Listen to moving air. What happens to the water?

Adapted from:
Hutchinson Public Schools, Hutchinson, Kansas (CFI #14)

Bubbles

Objective: Curiosity, investigation, expanding an everyday experience.

Materials: (May vary—but these might be good ones to begin with) Detergent, straws or pipe cleaners, newspaper, crayons.

Directions: Give child cup filled with 1/2 cup of detergent. (Do not tell what is in cup)

Ask the child if it is like a bar of soap. (Have one in your hand)

Will the bar of soap pour into a cup? Will the stuff in the cup pour into a cup? Yes—it is a *liquid.*

What is our liquid? It is a detergent. (Allow the child to smell, touch, taste.)

Let's see what happens if we use these pipe cleaners, dip and blow. Now—what did we make? What shape is it?

What happens if we blow it onto a piece of paper? Can you trace around the place where the bubble landed?

What colors do you see?

Are the bubbles the same size?

How do they move? (Through the air)

Can you pretend to be a bubble and dance so lightly?

Adapted from:
Hutchinson Public Schools,
Hutchinson, Kansas (CFI #14)

Memory Game

Objective: Cognitive development and language stimulation.

Materials: 3 or 4 interesting objects.

Directions: Line up three or four objects on the floor. Instruct your child to leave the room or shut his/her eyes. Rearrange the order of objects. The child then views the objects and tries to put them in their original order.

Suggestions: It is good to begin with objects generous in size. Start with just three objects and work up to more as the child seems ready. Sometimes it might be appropriate to choose seasonal objects to play the game with....pumpkin, leaf, pussy-willow branch, etc.

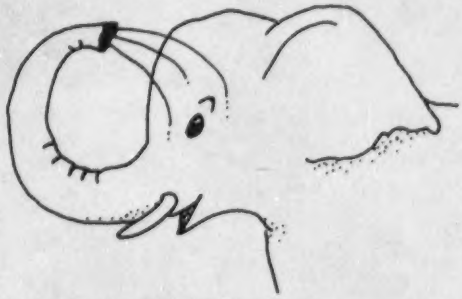
Adapted from:
Hutchinson Public Schools, Hutchinson, Kansas (CFI # 14)

INTELLIGENCE STRETCHERS

The following "intelligence stretchers" were put together by some teachers studying at the University of New Orleans but are to be used only as examples for you to make up your own as you help your 5-year-old use his/her imagination and creativity. Some are riddles and some non-verbal likenesses. Have some fun with your children and at the same time help them develop their mental capacities.

Riddles

I swing in the trees.
My play's very spunky.
I like bananas.
I am a (monkey).



I'm soft and clean.
I'm on your bed.
On me you put your little head.
What am I? (pillow).

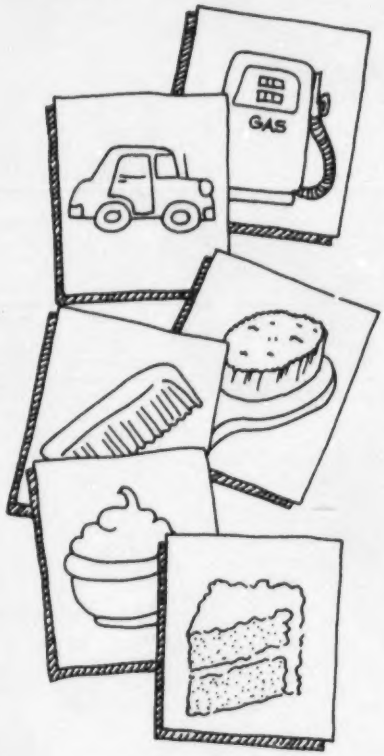
I'm an animal with a long nose.
I like to use it as a hose.
When I lift it, up it goes.
Who am I? (elephant).

I'm found in a tree.
I'm long and yellow.
I make a moneky a happy fellow.
What am I? (a banana).

It's on my face,
And with it I wink.
If I did not have it,
I could not blink.
What am I? (eye).

Adapted from:
Diocese of Baton Rouge, Catholic School Office, Baton Rouge, LA (CFI #18)

Same/Different



Objective: To distinguish relationship between two pictured objects (example, cup and saucer, mailman and bag, saddle and horse.)

Materials: Pictures of paired objects.

Directions: Cut out pictures and mount separately for matching game. Ask your child "What two things go together?"

Examples: Boxes of soap and washing machines
Gas pumps and cars
Pet food and cat or dog
Combs and brushes
Ice cream and cake

Adapted from:
Independent School District #181, Brainerd, Minnesota (CFI #23)

The Stumper

Materials: Paper, scissors

Directions: For this game cut out 10 circles, numbering them 1 through 10 and arrange them as in Fig. 1. Have your child figure how s/he can move only 3 circles to make it look like Fig. 2.

Fig. 1

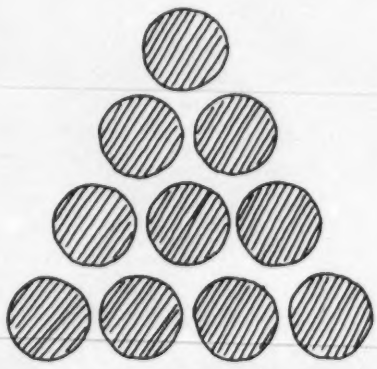
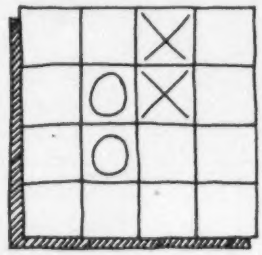


Fig. 2

Even Out

Materials: This game requires the 16 square game board above, 2 players and 2 pencils.

Directions: The first player places an X in any 2 adjacent squares. The second player places an O in any 2 adjacent squares. The game continues until there no longer exists 2 adjacent squares in which to place an X or O. The player facing this situation is the loser. In this game, the second player has the advantage if s/he plays correctly. Again, question the child about the strategy involved.



Is it better to go 1st or 2nd?
Can you think of a strategy that will always win? What?
This game has 16 squares. How would it change your strategy with an odd number of squares?

Adapted from:
Diocese of Baton Rouge Catholic School Office, Baton Rouge, Louisiana (CFI #18)

Solve This Problem

Objective: To solve simple everyday problem situations.

Materials: Pictures of objects that can be purchased or made from magazine clippings.

Directions: Give child pictures of an object. Ask where s/he would buy it.

State a certain situation. Ask child what s/he would do.

Adapted from:
Independent School District #181, Brainerd, Minnesota (CFI #23)

Creative Thinking

Children conditioned to coloring books will have difficulty in enjoying the freedom of creating. Coloring books condition children to adult concepts that they cannot produce alone and that therefore frustrate their creative ambitions.

The example below shows first, how the child drew a bird before using stereotyped workbooks; secondly, how the workbook is designed to teach a number concept; and third, how the child drew the birds after having been exposed to stereotypes.

Child's Bird (Original work)

Workbook Example (Color birds blue)

Child's latter work (When asked to draw birds)

After coloring the workbook illustration, the child lost his/her creative sensitivity and self-reliance. Experimental research has given us ample evidence that imitation can have a detrimental effect on the child's creativity.

How can we play the role of encourager rather than discourager of art? Remember how pleased we were by every attempt our children made to learn how to talk and our attitude gave them confidence to keep trying other words? This should be our attitude when they learn how to draw. However, there is one big difference between speech and art. In speech we want them to imitate the adult; in art they do not. Art is meant to be a personal expression of the individual. No two works of art can be alike. Therefore, if we show children how to draw something we substitute our ideas and forms for theirs and confuse them. This leads away from art. If we want them to develop their own strengths then we certainly don't want them to copy something. When they do express themselves in a picture we should ask them to tell us about the picture. Our role as encourager is really one of a listener and provider of the necessary materials for the art work. Such things as paper, crayons, tempera or watercolor paints, and clay are basic. String, cloth, and scrap materials of many kinds also can be used.

Another medium through which creativity can develop is music and dance. In the *Kindergarten Guidebook* issued by the State Department of Education of Louisiana 1967 there are four aspects which point out why music is invaluable in developing "an integrated personality":

1. Music fosters a sense of togetherness, and belonging to the group.
2. Music is one of the finest mediums for freeing the child of his fears and facilitates social adjustments.
3. Singing should essentially be an experience of fun and satisfaction.
4. For four and five-year-olds, informal type music is most profitable.

It is a beautiful and highly recommended custom to have family sing-a-longs in the home.

Four Facets of Creative Thinking

Creative thinking is also composed of four facets or abilities. E.P. Torrence, the father of creativity, has outlined them as follows:

1. **Fluency** which refers to the number of responses or possibilities produced.
2. **Flexibility** which refers to the variety of kinds of responses produced.
3. **Originality** which refers to the unusual or uncommon responses produced.
4. **Elaboration** which refers to building onto a basic idea to make it more of a story.

1. Fluency

How many ways?

How many ways can you touch your toes?
How can we speak without talking?
How many ways can you get from one side of the room to the other?
How many ways can you get wet?
How many ways can you get someone's attention?
How many ways can we move without walking?

Ask your child to name his/her favorite foods and plan a meal with your child helping.

2. Flexibility

Garden Tools?

If you didn't have garden tools to dig a garden what things could you use? (You should get such responses as popsicle sticks, rulers, a shoehorn, fingers, pencils, nails, a can top, etc., but your child may give an unusual response as one child did, "Get an anteater to do it." Great, Huh!)

3. Originality

What if....

-it no longer rained?
-you lived on the Moon?
-it was always dark and there was no sun?
-chairs could talk—what would they say?
-money grew on trees?
-all the food in the world tasted the same?
-it was always daytime?
-we all looked the same?

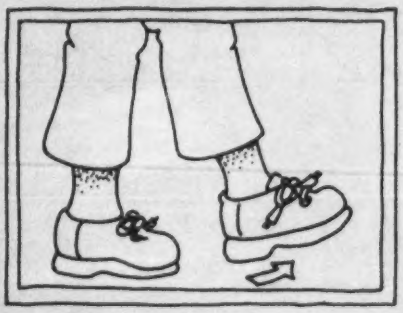
Ideas for Growing

Physical activity is normal and is crucial to proper growth and development. Such activity helps your child learn control of the body. The child learns to use the arms, legs, hands, and fingers effectively. Some muscles develop faster than others. Large muscles of the legs and arms develop before the small muscles of the hands and fingers. The young child can do activities which need big arm movements better than small work with fingers. Consequently the child's play materials should be planned with this in mind; for example, balls and large blocks. Things like detailed pictures in a color book are not suitable to eye and muscular development.

LARGE MUSCLE EXERCISES

Children need to discover how their bodies move and this means developing the large muscles in legs, arms and midsection. Exercises for these muscles include running, jumping, walking, twisting, etc. These muscles are the first to develop and the easiest to exercise.

Hokey Pokey



Materials: None

Directions: This is an action song to sing with your child. Stand face-to-face or form a circle. "You put your *left foot* in. You take your *left foot* out. You put your *left foot* in and you shake it all about. Then you do the Hokey Pokey and you turn yourself around, and that's what it's all about! (Clap, Clap) Repeat, substituting left foot with right foot, left hand with right hand, and whole body. As you sing song, do appropriate motions.

Doggie Bag

Materials: Bean Bag

Directions: Have child get on all fours on the floor and place a bean bag on the child's back. Tell child to try and toss the bag off by using a bucking motion.

Adapted from:
Pre-Elementary Right-to-Read, Hardin County, Kentucky (CFI #15)

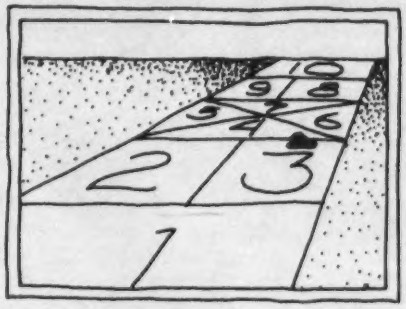
Let's Swing

Objective: Pumps swing independently

Directions: When your child is swinging, encourage him/her to relax and lean back. Challenge him/her to touch the sky with their toes. This skill will develop as the child begins to feel more secure so provide many opportunities to practice.

Adapted from:
Independent School District #181, Brainerd, Minnesota (CFI #23)

More Large Motor Activities



Teach your child the game of hopscotch in which the child hops on one foot from one box to the next.

Teach and play the game, "Dodge the Ball". You need a group of children to play this game.

Play the game "Follow the Leader" using hand, arm, feet, and head motions.

Teach your child how to skip by playing "A ticket, a taskit, a green and yellow basket."

Adapted from:
Diocese of Baton Rouge, Catholic School Office, Baton Rouge, Louisiana (CFI #18)

SMALL MOTOR ACTIVITIES

Exercises of this type enable the child to develop and improve the use of fingers, hands, and coordination of these. The child traces, cuts, strings, and imitates body movements, thus, increasing eye-hand coordination and developing those tiny muscles needed for these tasks. Exercises of this type are very important at home and school since these muscles are the last to fully develop.

Do As I Do

Materials: None

Directions: Here is an activity you can do with your child almost anywhere you go. Say to your child, "Roll your eyes," "Wrinkle your nose," "Make your hand go the way mine goes," "Raise your eyebrows," and so on.

Thumb Roll

Materials: None

Directions: Make a fist and roll the thumb in a circle. This may be done to music.

Play the Piano

Materials: None

Directions: Pretend a table in front of you is a piano. Hold your hands as though playing a piano. First play a soft tune. Then play loud music, fast music, slow music. Remember to move fingers independently of each other.

Finger Spread

Materials: None

Directions: Hold hands in front of you. Spread fingers wide apart and then bring fingers back together. Try exercise several times.

Adapted from:
Pre-Elementary Right-to-Read, Hardin County, Kentucky (CFI #15)

In order to write properly, a child must learn to hold and use crayons or pencils in an "adult fashion". A child needs to develop strength in his fingers and coordination before achieving an adult grasp. The following activities will be helpful.

Ball Squeeze

Materials: Rubber ball small enough to fit in child's hand.

Directions: Child will squeeze ball with all five fingers, then try squeezing with only 4 or 3 fingers.

Rhythm Sticks

Materials: Rhythm sticks, or 1 inch dowels about 12 inches long.

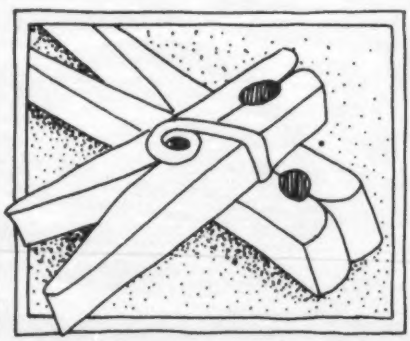
Directions: Child grasps sticks and taps or claps a rhythm, as child progresses, partner could be introduced.

Clothespin Game

Materials: Wooden clip clothespins, doll clothes, yarn for clothesline

Directions: Child hangs doll clothes on clothesline with wooden clothespins.

Adapted from:
Independent School District #181, Brainerd, Minnesota (CFI #23)



Cutting

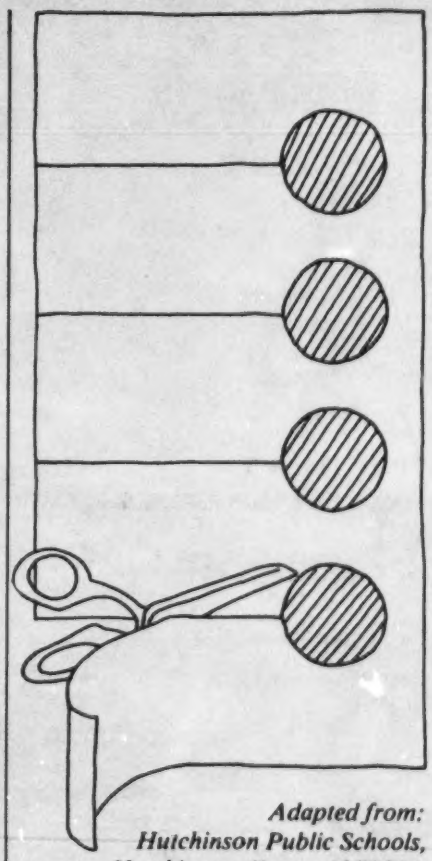
Objective: Small motor coordination, following directions, traffic safety colors and visual motor coordination.

Materials: Scissors, paper, green and red felt tip pens.

Directions: Draw 4 wide lines on paper using a green magic marker. Put a red circle at the top of each green line. Instruct child to start cutting the left green road at the signal "go", and to cut, staying on the road until they come to the red circle when they must stop.

Note: Cutting requires the ability to coordinate the eyes and the hand. To develop cutting skill, children may progress through the following sequence:

1. Wide straight line
2. Fringe
3. Four straight lines to make a square
4. Diagonal line to make two triangles from a square
5. Wide line magic market circle
6. Fine line circle
7. Irregular shapes



Adapted from:
Hutchinson Public Schools, Hutchinson, Kansas (CFI #14)

Paper Toss

Objective: Small muscle development, judge distance, finger strength.

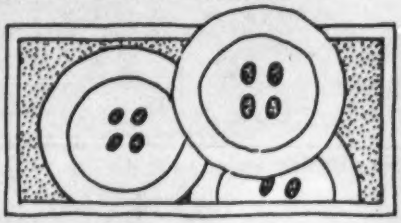
Materials: Old catalog, large box or basket.

Directions: Place a catalog in front of the child. Have child use *one hand* to rip the page off, crumble it into a ball, then toss it into a box target. Do this for 10 pages and then change hands.

Note: Encourage your child to use only the hand for the crumpling, not the hand and the body.

Adapted from:
Hutchinson Public Schools, Hutchinson, Kansas (CFI #14)

Button Toss



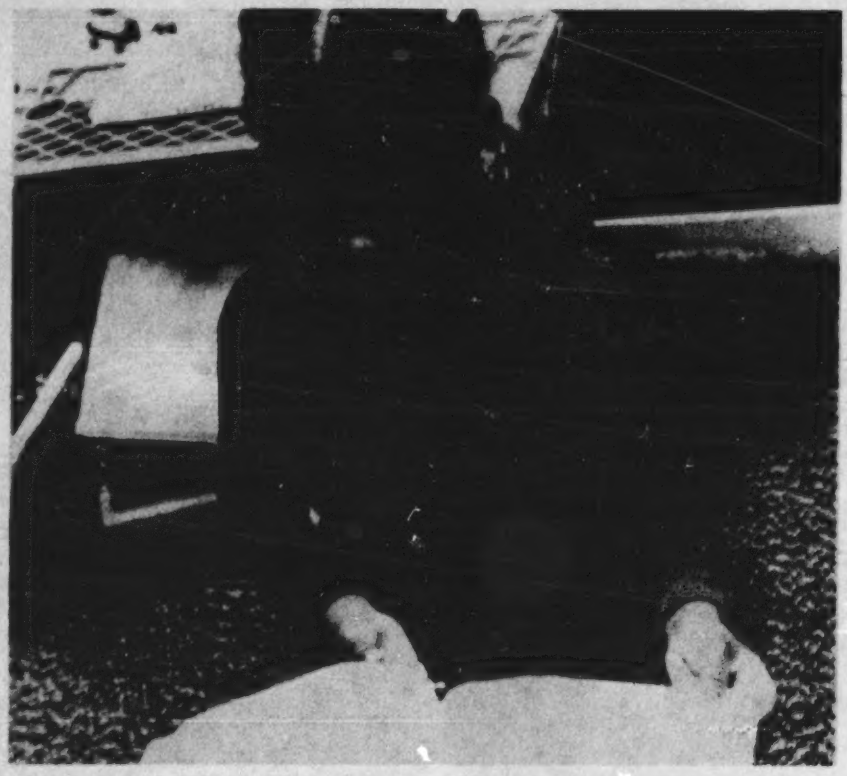
Objective: Arm coordination, counting, judge distances.

Materials: A large supply of buttons (from 5 to 20), a paper bag (grocery-size to start with) and a yardstick or masking tape (to make line on floor to stand behind).

Directions: Fold down top of bag. Place it on floor. (Put book in bottom of bag to keep it from toppling over.) Make line on floor. Try a short distance at first. Say "Stand behind this line. Throw one button at a time. Let's see how many we can get in the bag." When all the buttons have been thrown help child count the number in the bag. That's the score. Try again!!

Adapted from:
Rural Early Learning Project, Derby, Vermont (CFI #33)

VISUAL SKILLS



A Color Book

Materials: Scissors, paper, magazine or catalog.

Directions: Have your child cut objects out of magazine or catalog that are all the same color and paste them on paper with color word written at top. Make one page for each color and then put together as a color book.

Recognizing Colors

Materials: Sunday funnies.

Directions: After reading the comic strips to your child, name the colors and have your child point to them. Variation: have your child name the color.

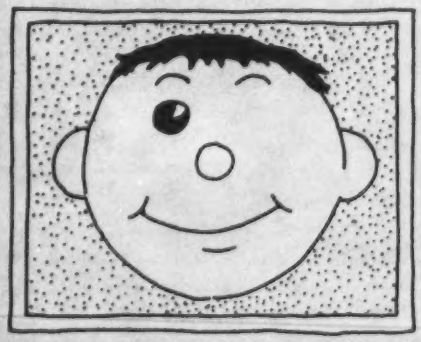
Adapted from:
Independent School District, Brainerd, Minnesota (CFI #23)

Add the Missing Parts

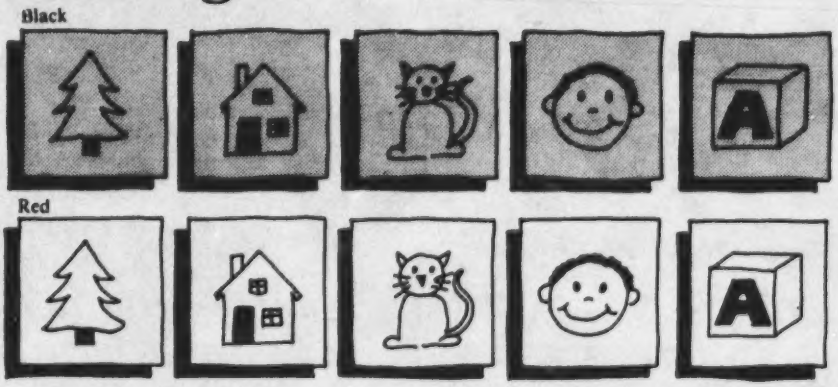
Objective: To develop visual perception.

Materials: Paper, pens or crayons.

Directions: Draw a picture leaving out a part of it and have the child draw the missing part.



Matching Game



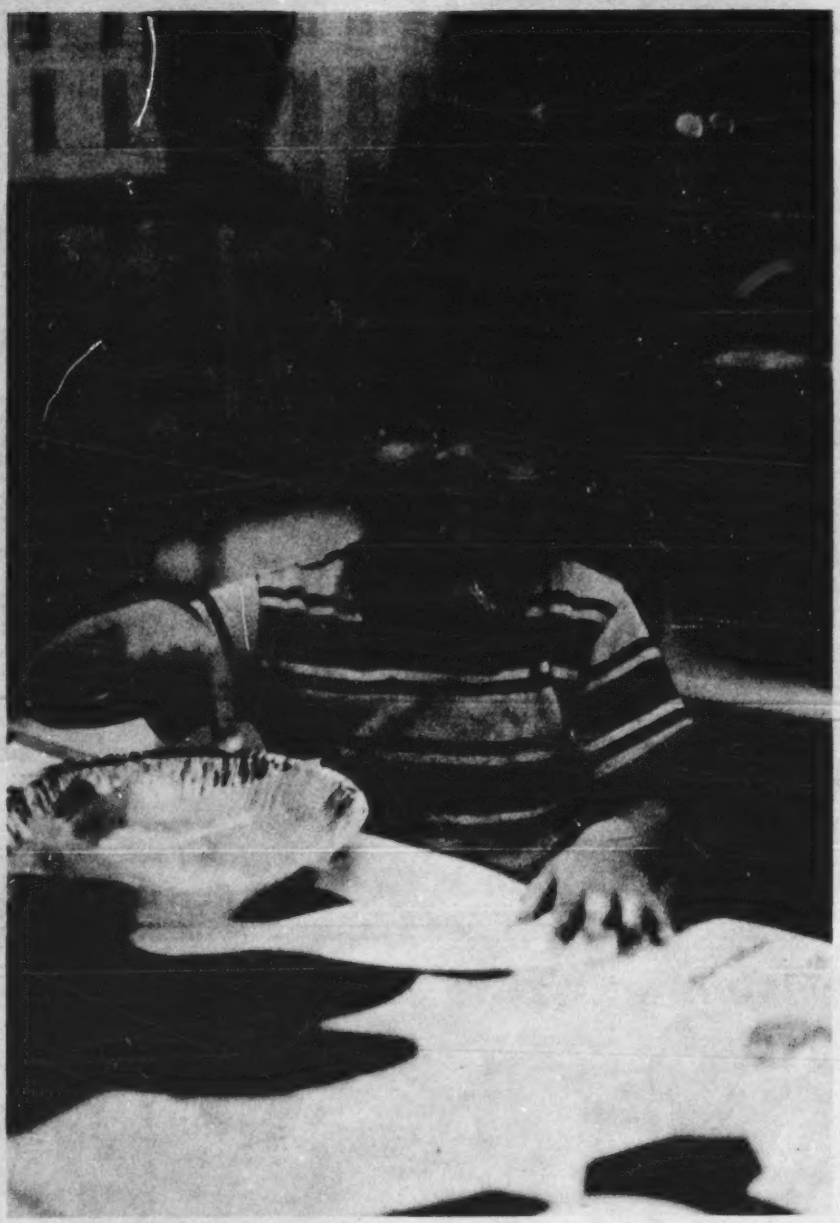
Objective: To develop visual perception.

Materials: Index cards, black and red pens.

Directions: Make two sets of picture cards. One set should be drawn with black pen, the other should be drawn in red.

Explain to the child that s/he must put all the black cards in a row and then find a red card exactly like the first black one and match them.

Adapted from:
"Handbook for Kindergarten Parents" Diocese of Baton Rouge, Catholic School Office, Baton Rouge, Louisiana (CFI #18)



Colors & Parts of the Body

Objective: Review of colors and parts of the body.

Materials: Clothing for getting dressed in the morning.

Directions: As your child is getting dressed, show him/her each piece of clothing and ask, "What color is it and where will the item go?" For example:

Pants—"Blue and they go on my legs."

Socks—"Black and they will go on my feet."

Matching Shapes

Objective: Visual discrimination, finding pictures of shapes.

Materials: Old magazine, paper, glue, crayons or pens.

Directions: Have five separate sheets of paper. Each sheet has one basic shape at the top.

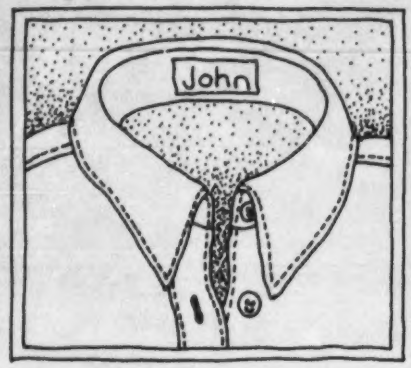
Encourage children to fill their books with drawings, paintings or pictures from magazines of the five basic shapes.

Remember to look at the top of each page for the correct shape.

Help child decorate the front page. Remember to place child's name in big bold print on front page.

Adapted from:
Detroit Public Schools, Detroit, Michigan (CFI #22)

My Name



Objective: Help in recognizing his/her own name.

Directions: To help your child learn to recognize his/her own name label your child's clothes with name. Have your child's name on child's bedroom door. Eventually guide the child in writing his/her name.

Children must be sufficiently developed physically and neurologically before they are ready to read. Children differ considerably in the way they take to stimulation and new experiences. Therefore, children will develop reading skills at different rates and in different fashions.

Adapted from:
"Handbook for Kindergarten Parents" Diocese of Baton Rouge, Catholic School Office, Baton Rouge, Louisiana (CFI #18)

Ideas for Succeeding

The *Ideas for Succeeding* section is intended to guide you to help your child feel good. Children who feel good about themselves are more likely to be successful in reading. Checklists are provided to help you think about what you are teaching your children, since your children copy or model your behavior.

Remember! No one is perfect. It's what you do *most* of the time that counts.

Feelings

What kind of model are you? Do you...

_____set a good example for your child?
_____listen when your child talks?
_____show your child love?
_____talk with your child about feelings?
_____understand that a child has a right to feelings?
_____accept your child's feelings?
_____have confidence in your child's ability to handle feelings?
_____show concern for your child's feelings?
_____remember that a child may not do something perfectly the first time?
_____stress the positive and ignore the negative?
_____speak quietly and with respect as with an adult?
_____speak distinctly and simply?
_____give directions in a positive form?
_____give the child chances to make choices?
_____avoid laughing at a child's feelings?
_____expect reasonable results from your child?
_____avoid doing things for your child that can be done by one's self?

Do you...

_____ask rather than tell?
_____say please and thank you.
_____show how before expecting a child to do a task?
_____praise or compliment, even for small successes?
_____answer questions without complaining?
_____participate in family discussions?
_____read newspapers and magazines?
_____talk about current events in front of the children?
_____say "I was wrong" when you were?
_____talk to children as courteously as you talk to adults?
_____accept people who look and act differently?
_____talk about others in positive ways?
_____react to frustrating situations in positive ways?
_____accept problems as challenges?

Adapted from:
Pre-Elementary Right-to-Read, Hardin County, Kentucky (CFI #15)

Self-Sufficiency

Allow your child to do these activities s/he can do for him/herself?

Putting on socks and shoes
Wiping up spills
Buttering toast
Spreading peanut butter
Pouring cereal, juice, milk
Washing fruit
Using serving utensils to take salad, applesauce, etc.
Shelling peanuts

Adapted from:
Rural Early Learning Project, Derby, Vermont (CFI #33)

Listen!

The most effective way to develop a child's ability to express needs verbally is for the parent to be a patient listener.

When a young child sees the parent as an interested participant in a conversation, s/he will make every attempt to communicate verbally. If a parent does not respond until a child "cries out" or tugs on a parents' clothing, this habit of non-verbal (non-talking) communication is soon instilled.

When a child expresses needs verbally, listen!

Adapted from:
Brainerd Independent School District (CFI #23)

Help Children Cope

Interview each of your children. Let one of your children interview you. This activity can be done with everyone present. The answers can be written, spoken, or acted out.

Question #1

How do people know when you're angry?

How do you look?
What do you say?
How do you behave?

Question #2

How do people know when you are pleased?
How do you look?
What do you say?
How do you behave?

Sometimes between parents and children there are some small things that "bug" you.

Child: Think of things that your mom or dad does that bug you. Let the person know how you feel and why by using the formula below:

When you _____
thing that bugs you

I feel _____ be-
feeling

cause _____
reason why it bugs you

Example: Grandpop, when you turn the TV channel to something you want to see I feel "put down" because you didn't even consider what I wanted to see.

Adapted from:
School District of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (CFI #30)

Fact & Fantasy

Sharing Time: Share stories with your child. Tell stories of situations that your child was recently involved in and indicate that this is a "real" story or "true" story.

Also read books or tell stories that are "make-believe" and indicate this to your child before you begin.

Hint: When your child tells of an incident that is obviously fantasy, react with a statement such as, "That's a fine make-believe story, Mary. It's fun to pretend, isn't it?"

Adapted from:
Independent School District #181, Brainerd, Minnesota (CFI #23)

Table-Talk Activities

Why Do Them?

1. Make mealtime more lively and interesting.
2. Develop speaking and listening skills in children.
3. Help children get a sense of identity as children become clearer about their feelings and opinions about various issues.
4. Help parent know children better. Make parent more aware of differences between children... and their sameness, too.

How to Do Them

1. Wait until food is on the table and everyone seated.*
2. Let one member pick a topic or question that is interesting or thought-provoking. Topics should be:
   a. something about which most family members would have something to say.
   b. something that calls for opinions. There is no right answer.
3. Pass the food and start eating. (This gives everyone a chance to think about what they are going to say.)
4. Go around left or right of the person who presents the topic. Each person should get a chance to respond when their turn comes. They may pass if they wish.

*If blessings are to be said this would seem the appropriate time for this.

Some Suggestions for Topics:

1. What was the best thing that happened to you today?
2. What was the worst thing?
3. What is your most prized possession?
4. Who is your favorite person outside the family?
5. What is your favorite food?
6. What is something you would like to learn to do?
7. Who is the person or TV character you would most like to be if you couldn't be yourself? This person could be from news, sports, entertainment, your family and friends.
8. Who is the person in the family you think you are *most* like and why do you think this?
9. Who in the family do you think you are *least* like and why?

Adapted from:
School District of Philadephia, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (CFI #30)

How to Select Books, Toys & Records

Books:

1. Teach your child to love books.
2. Select balance of fiction and non-fiction.
3. Balance between borrowing and buying.
4. Probably the single most important criteria of selecting books to read to preschoolers is that the parent should like the book.
5. Most loved books will show most wear and tear.
6. Provide bookshelves in child's room for his growing library.

Toys:

1. Safe
   a. Does not have sharp edges.
   b. Not made of material that is easily splintered or shattered.
   c. Does not have small pieces.
2. Durable
   a. Wood and sturdy metal—most durable.
   b. Plastic and tin—least durable.
3. 90% of play in the child and 10% in the toy.
4. Fun.
5. Suitable to age and stage of development of child.

Records:

1. Buy the child a simple record player or tape player along with inexpensive records.
2. Should have good long-playing records.
3. Criteria for buying children's music records.
   a. music should be simple
   b. not be too cluttered with orchestration or big choruses
   c. Tune or rhythm should be catchy and appeal to children.
4. Categories of records for preschoolers.
   a. Folk songs.
   b. Music of other cultures.
   c. Miscellaneous music records.
   d. Activity records.
   e. Intellectual stimulation records.
   f. Story book and record combinations.
5. 3-step process of playing a record for a child.
   a. Prepare child to listen to the record.
   b. Listen to the record with him/her.
   c. Talk with him about the record after s/he has heard it.
6. Change listening from *passive* to *active* experience.

Adapted from:
S.W. & West Central Ed. Coop. Service Unit, Marshall, Minnesota (CFI #25)